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Mahama won't be in Ghana for IEA debate - Amaliba

Saturday 14th May, 2016 12:23 pm



Abraham Amaliba

A member of the National Democratic Congress' (NDC) legal team, Abraham Amaliba has said president John Mahama will not be in the country on the date scheduled for the Institute of Economic Affairs presidential debate.

The IEA is expected to organise the event in September but speaking on Citi FM's political analysis programme, **The Big Issue**, Amaliba said the President will be at the United Nations General Assembly meeting hence cannot participate in the debate.

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"...The dates that they have even proposed, on those periods, the president will be out on a General Assembly meeting at the UN," he added.

The IEA has come under intense fire from some major political parties ahead of the November elections, for what they describe as disrespectful and unfair arrangements adopted for this year's presidential debates.

The National Organizer of the NDC, Kofi Adams has accused the IEA of posing as a "headmaster trying to summon political parties on its platform."

The IEA, a civil society organisation which organizes such debates, recently announced new changes to the programme, revealing that it will organize a

separate debate for the flagbearers of the two biggest parties in the country.

But, the IEA has been chastised over the new decision.

According to Mr. Amaliba the IEA could have avoided the wave of criticisms if it had consulted the parties.

"I'm surprised that the IEA would even attempt doing this. You should know that these are the key stakeholders, these are the people who are the shakers and movers of the election, they have their calendar and so I thought that someone in the IEA would have told them to first consult the political parties to see how the political parties can buy into their calendar but to impose this on them is not right," he argued.

Amaliba further urged the IEA to "take the criticisms in good faith" saying "Nobody is saying that they will not attend their debate, but they should have a big heart."

Our dates are flexible

Meanwhile, the Executive Director of the IEA, Jean Mensah said the dates for the debates are flexible and amenable to change to suit the programmes of political parties involved.

By: Godwin A. Allotey/citifmonline.com/Ghana

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